



Goal 1: Meet Community Parks and Open Space Needs

Parks are a key contributor to the quality of life in a community. Parks provide opportunities for a community's citizens to escape urban life to reflect, recreate, play, and reconnect with nature. Parks also provide a unique setting for individuals to interact, build relationships, and develop the sense of commonality that is the foundation of community.

The adequacy of a community's park space is often reflected in other indicators of community health, including crime rates, property values, and the rate of home ownership. Communities with too little park space are more likely to experience higher levels of crime. Without the opportunities to burn off energy provided by parks other less positive outlets are often found.

The amount of park space also contributes positively to property values and home ownership rates in a community. Parks and related amenities are one of the key factors many people consider when looking to purchase a home or to continue to live in a neighborhood.

The leadership of the City of Long Beach recognized the importance of the City's neighborhoods and environment in adopting the City's future vision as part of the Strategic Plan.

Long Beach Strategic Plan Vision

Long Beach will be a community of neighborhoods focused on youth and education, with safety and economic opportunity for all, and a responsive, accountable government, in a healthy, green environment.

Source: Long Beach Strategic Plan 2010, Published January, 2001

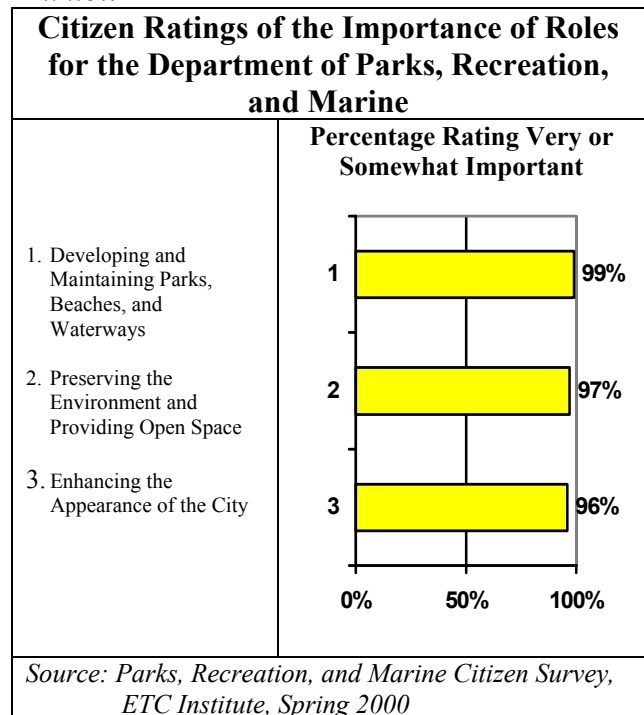
In interviews conducted as part of the development of this strategic plan Long Beach City Council members discussed the importance of parks and open spaces in the City. They also

stated they considered expanding and improving the City's park system as a priority.

Parks, Open Spaces, And The City's Appearance Are Important To The Residents Of Long Beach

The following exhibit shows the vast majority of Long Beach's residents feel parks, open space and the City's appearance are important. Nearly all residents surveyed felt developing and maintaining parks, beaches, and waterways was an important role for the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine, with 99 percent rating it as very or somewhat important.

Exhibit 1



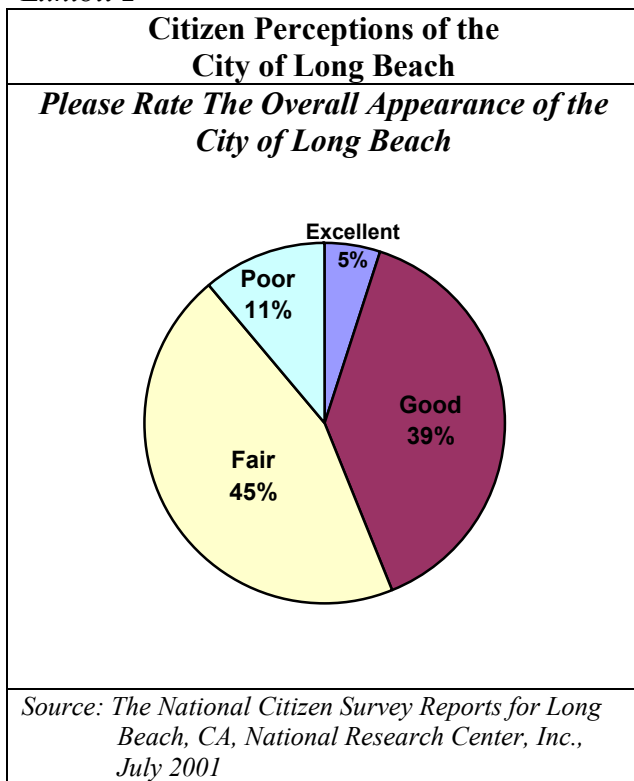
Nearly as many residents felt the Department's roles in preserving the environment and providing open space, and enhancing the appearance of the City were important, with 97 percent and 96 percent respectively rating these as either very or somewhat important.



Long Beach Residents Rating of the City's Appearance

While most Long Beach citizens feel the appearance of the City is important, a smaller percentage are satisfied with that appearance. As the following exhibit shows, 44 percent of residents surveyed rated the City's appearance as either excellent or good, while 56 percent rated it as either fair or poor.

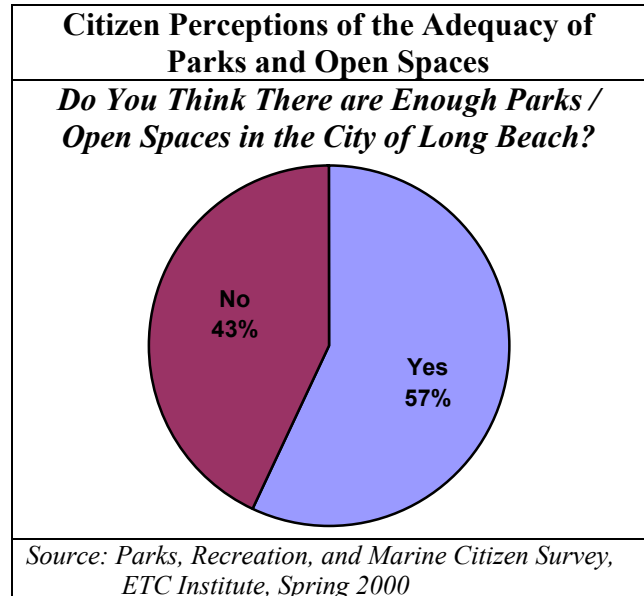
Exhibit 2



Many Long Beach Residents Feel the City Lacks Adequate Parks and Open Space

While a majority of the City's residents are satisfied with the amount of parks and open spaces in Long Beach, a large number are not. As the following exhibit shows, 57 percent of residents surveyed thought the City had enough parks and open spaces. However, 43 percent did not think the City had enough.

Exhibit 3

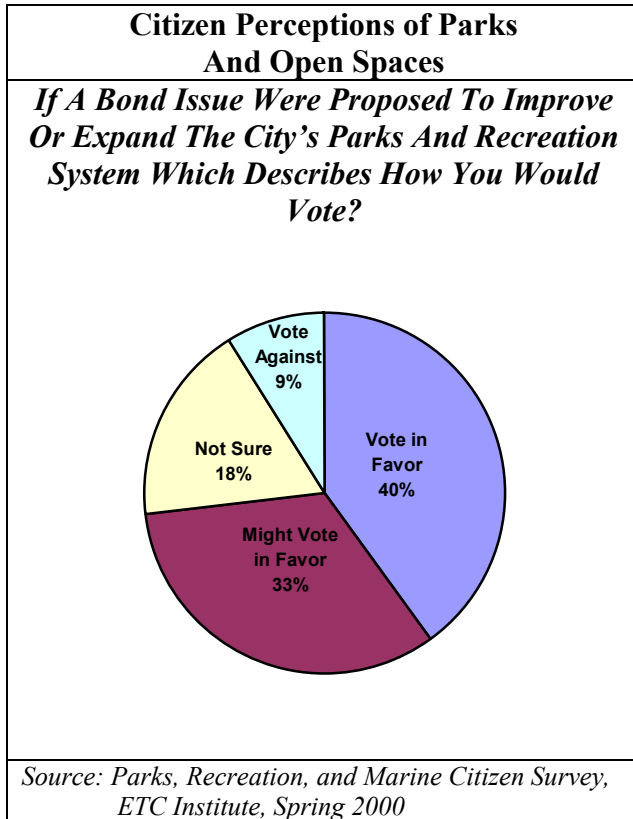


The level of the dissatisfaction with the amount of parks and open spaces is reflected in the degree to which the residents would be willing to support a tax and additional spending to expand or improve the City's parks and recreation system.

As the following exhibit shows, only 9 percent of residents surveyed said they would vote against a bond measure to improve or expand the City's parks and recreation system. Forty percent would vote in favor, 33 percent might vote in favor, and 18 percent were unsure.



Exhibit 4



Given current anti-tax sentiment among citizens in general, and Long Beach residents in particular, this shows a substantial level of support.

Long Beach's Parks and Recreation Areas

The City of Long Beach has a substantial parks and recreational space system. This includes 94 parks encompassing 1,672 acres. Parks are defined as tracts of land that are accessible to or benefiting the general public through preserving natural areas or promoting mental and physical health of the community through recreational, cultural, or relaxation pursuits. The City's beach areas are considered as park space.

The following exhibit shows these parks by type, including the number of each type and total number of acres by type.

Exhibit 5

Long Beach Parks by Type		
Type of Park	Number	Acres
Mini Parks	22	21
Neighborhood Parks	19	147
Community Parks	13	464
Regional Parks	1	401
Greenway Parks	9	71
Special Use Parks	29	321
Beaches	1	247
Total Parks	94	1,672

Each of these types of parks is defined as follows:

- ✓ **Mini Parks** – are small parks serving residents within one-eighth mile. They are used to address limited, isolated, or unique needs. Mini parks are generally less than 2 acres in size, and may include seating areas, picnic tables, and playground equipment.
- ✓ **Neighborhood Parks** – are the basic unit of the parks system and serve as the recreational and social focus of a neighborhood. Intended to serve residents within one-quarter mile in high population density areas, and one-half mile in low population density area. Neighborhood parks may include recreation fields, courts and rinks, picnic areas, and playgrounds.
- ✓ **Community Parks** – serve a broader purpose than neighborhood parks focusing on community recreation including sports fields, and preserving unique landscapes and open spaces. Community parks are intended to serve residents within a one-mile radius.
- ✓ **Regional Parks** – serve a broader purpose than community parks. Their purpose is to meet community based recreational needs as well as to preserve unique landscapes and open spaces. Regional parks are intended to serve



residents within a five-mile radius. In Long Beach El Dorado Park and the Beach area are considered regional parks.

- ✓ **Greenway Parks** – are used to tie the park system components together to form a continuous park environment. In Long Beach greenway parks are largely undeveloped ribbons of green space.
- ✓ **Beaches** – Long Beach has approximately 6.5 linear miles of beach

comprising approximately 247 acres. Although owned by the State, the City has responsibility for operating and maintaining the beach and beach facilities. An estimated 7.5 million people visits the beaches annually.

The following exhibit shows the locations of the City's parks and beaches: